The Budget Executive Team created a team of representatives from the WO, regions and Human Resource Management (HRM) to develop a strategy to ensure the Agency stays within projected allocations of wildland fire program salary and expenses (WFSE) funding. The WFSE team's core objective is to ensure the Agency maintains an effective and efficient Fire and Aviation Management (FAM)organization that supports our mission and stays within allocated budgets across each Region and Deputy Chief area.

- The WFSE team will provide objectives, goals and guidelines to the regions and directorate areas that promote transparency and accountability pertaining specifically to hiring actions.
- When establishing these objectives, goals and guidelines, the WFSE team will consider the FAM priorities of suppression, hazardous fuels reduction, the "Wildfire Crisis Strategy", and disaster recovery.
- Transparency and alignment among regional and national leadership are required to ensure financial solvency in FY25 and beyond. Prior to advertising positions, units are expected to gain approval from their Regional Forester or Deputy Chief. This approval must include whether the position will be advertised FS-within region, FS-FS wide, or external to the FS.
- New GS-10 or WG-10 and above positions or positions advertised or filled other than internal hires are not accounted for in unit headcounts. Such positions must be added to a region's headcounts and that region will be required to make adjustments to future hiring plans, i.e. not fill or remove some other position(s) from their organization. Regions are encouraged to consult with their regional workforce planning leads on a periodic basis (quarterly at a minimum) to ensure headcount metrics are achieved.

The current funding situation calls for us to make difficult decisions for FY 2025 and FY 2026 to stay within our budget and projected allocations.

- We remain committed to having 11,300 operational wildland firefighters (GS-9 and below) onboard by mid-July before we approach the busiest part of the fire year. (Regional target numbers provided at the end of this document—total number includes both temporary and permanent.)
    - The 11,300 positions include Interagency Hotshot Crew Superintendents (regardless of grade) and Heavy Equipment Operators/Supervisors (Fire Dozer/Plow Operators) as well as Hotshot, Helitack and Engine Crews; Assistant District Fire Management Officers; and Initial Attack Dispatchers.
    - Regions will continue to hire individuals into these positions as they have done in previous years.
    - 120-day details, temporary promotions, lateral reassignments and recruit-to-fill may all be used.

  - Funded tours for 13/13s and 18/8s will not be increased or extended. Hiring units should look for opportunities to reduce tour lengths where feasible.
  - No temporary positions will be converted to permanent.

FAM programs will reduce, agency-wide, its organization by about 280 positions over the next two fiscal years at the GS- and WG-10and above levels in FY25 and FY26 (at least 140 positions per fiscal year). The required number of position reductions will be evaluated continuously as the agency gains further clarity of long-term budget deficits.

- These reductions will include a mix of fire retirement covered and non-covered positions; they are based on GS or WG level of 10 and above.
- Every vacancy will be given a hard look nationally or regionally for reduction opportunities. The WFSE team will work with the regions and FAM WO to identify which positions will be filled based on established priorities. Reductions may be accomplished through not filling vacancies even if they are necessary to meet FAM standardization or modernization.
- Funded tours for 13/13s and 18/8s will not be increased or extended. Hiring units should look for opportunities to reduce tour lengths where feasible.
- No temporary positions will be converted to permanent.

For several months, hiring of FAM GS-10 and WG-10 and above positions was paused. Regions and WO FAM recently submitted current unfilled positions to the WFSE team for consideration.

- The hiring board identified a first tier of critical positions, predominantly tied to operational work. Regions and WO FAM may begin hiring these positions immediately. The critical positions approved for hiring are listed at the end of this document.
- 120-day details, temp promotions, lateral reassignments and recruit to fill may all be used.
- As additional vacancies arise in the first-tier categories, units may continue to hire if approval is received by a Regional Forester or Deputy Chief, or their acting.
- The hiring board will continue to collaborate with each region and WO FAM to determine a strategy and need for filling additional positions beyond the first-tier categories.

The hiring board will evaluate FAM GS-9 and WG-10 and below positions that are not included in the 11,300 positions identified above during FY2025 and identify necessary adjustments.

- These positions include Fire Cache, Logistics Dispatchers, Fire Lookouts, Incident Business, GACC positions and others.

- The hiring board is gathering data to better understand the need for filling vacancies in these positions, as well as the tradeoffs and potential unintended consequences of not filling them.

GS-09 and below operational firefighter targets for FY 2025

- Includes permanent and temporary (1039) positions for the following categories: Interagency Hotshot Crew Superintendents (regardless of grade), Heavy Equipment Operators/Supervisors (Fire Dozer/Plow Operators), Hotshot, Helitack and Engine Crews; Assistant District Fire Management Officers; and Initial Attack Dispatchers.
- As hiring progresses throughout the year, coordination between the Regions will be essential to ensure that the hiring objective of 11,300 operational fire fighters is achieved. This may require adjustments to headcount target between regions.

REGION	Headcount Target
Northern Region (R-1)	1469
Rocky Mountain Region (R-2)	762
Southwest Region (R-3)	1219
Intermountain Region (R-4)	1335
Pacific Southwest Region (R-5)	3536
Northwest Region (R-6)	1975
Southern Region (R-8)	632
Eastern Region (R-9)	325
Alaska Region (R-10)	32
Other Program Areas (WO, Bus Ops, LE&I)*	95
Grand Total	**11380**

Regional GS-10 and above targeted *reductions* FY 2025 and FY 2026

REGION	**Reduction**
Northern Region (R1)	31
Rocky Mountain Region (R2)	23
Southwest Region (R3)	28
Intermountain Region (R4)	32
Pacific Southwest Region (R5)	49
Northwest Region (R6)	39

Alaska Region (R10)	2
All Program Areas (WO, Bus Ops, I&E&I)	29
Grand Total	**280**

Tier 1 GS-10 and Above Positions Approved for Hiring ***Regions and Directorates are responsible for staying within assigned headcounts***
Airplane Pilot
Assistant Regional Fire Director
Aviation Program Analyst
Smoke Coordinator
Assistant Cache Manager
Airworthiness Inspector
Branch Chief, UAS
Avionics Inspector
Aviation Safety Inspector
Branch Chief, Info Management
Center Manager
Deputy Director, Aviation/Operations
Deputy Director, Operations
Deputy Fire Management Officer
Assistant Fire Management Officer
Dispatch Center Manager
Zone Fire Management Officer
Fire Cache Supervisor
Fixed Wing Specialist
Forest Aviation Officer
Forest Fire Planner
Forest Fire Staff Officer
GACC Coordinator
Helicopter Base Manager
Helicopter Inspector Pilot
Helicopter Operations Specialist
Incident Business Specialist (GS-13)
Pilot
Regional Aviation Officer
Regional Fire Director
Smokejumper Pilot
Unit Aviation Officer
Fire Management Officer